



Moab District Division of Fire Management

For Immediate Release
June 22, 2004

Contact: Heather O'Hanlon 435-259-2184

BLM Brings in Additional Fire Resources

Moab District, Bureau of Land Management.

Additional fire fighting resources have been brought into the area to contend with the fires that accompany the dry lightning storms of monsoon season.

The BLM contracted the Hendrickson Air Service Super Thrush single engine air tanker (SEAT) out of Chico, California. It arrived June 20 and should be online and in service June 23. At this time the plane is scheduled to stay until the first part of July and potentially through all of July. This particular plane will carry 300 gallons of fire retardant or Class A foam.

Presently it will be stationed out of the Monticello Airport and serving the Emery, Carbon, Grand and San Juan Counties. San Juan County will be providing a water-tender and the water for the batch plant that will be mixing the retardant and foam.

Along with the plane comes "SEAT Manager," Andre Ruoti, she will manage all business related to the plane. The arrival of the new firefighting resources also means a few seasonal jobs will be created. "Mixers" will be hired by the contractor to make the retardant and foam in addition to a qualified truck driver with a CDL. For additional information, please contact Workforce Services.

Wildland fire fighters consider the SEAT a valuable tool in their arsenal of fire fighting equipment. With any fire, timing can be critical to early control and these planes are able to quickly reach fires in areas difficult to access. The versatile Thrush can stay airborne for up to three hours and is more maneuverable than larger planes because of its smaller size. In the case of a remote fire, the Thrush can quickly and accurately drop a load of foam or retardant, provide reconnaissance information, and improve the chance of stopping a fire before it becomes unmanageable.

The addition of the plane to our resources will not solve all the fire problems of our area. Drought conditions, the Ips beetle and human-caused fires still complicate the equation. However, it will increase our chances of catching fires before they grow to catastrophic size.

For more fire information go to website www.utahfireinfo.gov.